



Lori James-Townes is the Executive Director of the National Association for Public Defense (NAPD). Prior to her current role, Lori served as NAPD's Assistant Training Director. Lori's social work and public defender careers span decades, including serving as Director of Social Work and Leadership Development with the Maryland Office of Public Defender. Lori has a passion for teaching future change agents and leaders and as a result continues to serve as an adjunct clinical instructor at Towson University, Department of Family Studies, and Community Development, after departing her full-time position at the University. Previous college instruction includes the University of Maryland School of Social Work and Morgan State University. Her commitment to public service is notable as she serves as President of the University of Maryland's School of Social Work Alumni Board of Directors. Other board appointments include the Board of Directors; Black Public Defender Association (Co-Director of Training and Development); and Past-Chair of the National Alliance of Sentencing Advocates and Mitigation Specialist. She is also the President & CEO of Expand-Now, LLC. Through Expand-Now, she can pour into others through speaking, training, development activities, coaching, and consulting. Lori has over 27 years of teaching, forensic social work, leadership, and management experience in juvenile justice, mental health, and public defender settings. Lori is a certified John Maxwell Trainer, Coach, and Speaker, speaking to audiences nationwide and abroad. Lori has developed programs that are now national models for other agencies. In 2015, The Daily Record Newspaper named her as one of Maryland's Top 100 Women. The Alumni on the Move Award was bestowed upon her by Morgan State University School of Social Work (March 2015). She was honored with the Presidential Award from Morgan State University in recognition of her outstanding achievements and accomplishments (2012). NLADA recognized Lori's contribution to social work and public defense, presenting her with both the National Gideon's Heroes Award (2003) and Mitigation Lifetime Achievement Award (2006) respectively. She is a member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.